U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration
Office of Personnel

P56

Physical Scientist and Chemist

J24.2:

DEA History and Mission

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was established in July 1, 1973, as a result of Presidential Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1973. This plan consolidated the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement and the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence.

The major responsibilities include: developing, planning and evaluating overall Federal drug law enforcement strategy and programs; fully investigating and preparing for prosecution of suspects connected with illicit drugs seized at U.S. ports—of—entry and international borders; conducting all relations with drug law enforcement officials of foreign governments under the policy guidance of the Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control; fully coordinating and cooperating with state and local law enforcement efforts; and regulating the legal manufacture of drugs and controlled substances under Federal regulations.

Enforcement

DEA is responsible for the enforcement of the laws and statues relating to narcotics, marijuana, depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens. Its objectives are to reach all levels of sources of supply and seize illegal drugs before they reach the user. To achieve its mission, DEA has stationed highly trained personnel along the many and varied routes of illicit traffic, both in the United States and in foreign countries. DEA has 19 domestic divisional offices and 40 foreign country offices. Additionally, it has numerous district and resident offices throughout the United States and overseas.

Diversion Control

DEA also regulates the legal distribution of narcotics and dangerous drugs. This includes establishing import, export and manufacturing quotas for these controlled drugs. Drug manufacturers, distributors, practitioners and other persons responsible for handling, dispensing, or prescribing narcotics and dangerous drugs are subject to periodic inspections by DEA diversion investigators who check for recordkeeping and security safeguards of controlled substances. Such supervision of legitimate trade insures an adequate supply of drugs for medicinal purposes and research and at the same time it is instrumental in preventing diversion of drugs into illicit channels.

Your Career

Your Work

As a physical scientist or chemist, you will be involved in research, development, application of systems and technology, and other scientific support work for DEA law enforcement, intelligence and regulatory functions worldwide. A physical scientist may develop improved surveillance techniques, better detection and tracking of vehicles, and participate in improving communications systems and protection equipment. Chemists identify sources of powders, tablets, and capsules. Physical scientists and chemists will be challenged with these and other progressively responsible assignments.

Salary

Your grade level and salary will depend upon your qualifications. Trainee grade levels are at GS-5 or GS-7, and someone with experience may enter at a higher level along the career ladder to GS-12. Selection to higher graded and senior and managerial positions will depend on performance and competitive selection. Actual salary levels at different grade levels are listed on current publicly availabe salary scales, which also include ten steps within each grade, representing salary increases for length of service. Every employee serving under the General Schedule (GS) pay plan is eligible for within-grade pay increases for satisfactory performance unless serving under temporary appointment. An employee becomes eligible for an increase to the next higher pay step within his/her grade and pay plan after a prescribed waiting period. The meriit pay system covers many employees above GS-12. A special formula linking performance appraisals and awards with salary increases and bonuses is used in lieu of within- grade increases for such "GM" employees.

Career Development

Your career is monitored and enhanced through a career development plan, through which goals and means of reaching them are targeted.

Under DEA's merit promotion plan you will advance to positions of higher responsibilities and pay according to demonstrated potential.

Recognition

DEA's incentive awards program gives special recognition to superior work performance or suggestions which improve operations. These awards may be cash, honorary, or salary increases.

Fringe Benefits

Leave

You earn 13 days of sick leave and from 13 to 26 days of annual leave each year depending on length of Government service. There are also ten paid Federal holidays.

Insurance and Retirement

You may join one of several group health insurance plans and participate in a low-cost group life insurance plan. Employees also participate in an excellent and generous retirement program. The Government shares the costs of these plans.

Pride

You will be proud to participate in a high priority effort for your country.

Qualifications

Required

You must be:
—A United States citizen;
—In good health;
—Able to pass a complete background investigation.

Basic Requirements for GS-5 Entry Level:

A. Physical Scientist positions candidates must show successful completion of the requirements prescribed in either 1 or 2.

1. A full 4-year course in an accredited college or university leading to a bachelor's (or higher) degree in physical science, engineering or mathematics that included 24 semester hours in physical science and/or closely related engineering science.

2. A combination of 4 years of experience and education that included 24 semester hours of physical science and/or closely related engineering science such as mechanics, dynamics, properties of materials, and electronics in an accredited college or university. This combination of experience and education must have demonstrated that the candidate has acquired a mastery of the fundamental physical and mathematical sciences comparable in scope and intensity to that which would have been acquired through the successful completion of a 4-year college or university curriculum described in paragraph 1.

B. Chemist positions.

This is the same as for physical scientists, except that life sciences is a specialty accepted and mathematics is not a specialty accepted for a degree; and at least 30 semester hours are required in chemistry rather than the other 24 hours requirement. There are also minimum science and mathematics requirements of usually one or two courses. A pre-employment physical examination is required.

Requirements for GS-7 Entry Level for Physical Scientists and Chemists:

To qualify at the GS-7 level, all the requirements for a GS-5 level must be met with an addition of one of the following:

1. One year of professional experience in or directly related to the scientific field involved in the position.

2. Thirty semester hours of graduate study in chemistry or closely related field.

3. A 2.9 grade point average (A=4.0) or equivalent in all undergraduate courses completed (up to time of application or during last 2 years of undergraduate work).

4. A standing in upper third of your class in undergraduate work.

5. A 3.5 grade point average or equivalent in chemistry or closely related major field or undergraduate study (up to time of application or during last 2 years of undergraduate work).

6. Election to membership in one of the recognized national honorary societies.

Ratings above the GS-7 level are based upon length and type of experience in the appropriate field, graduate work, degrees earned by the candidate, or a combination of such education and experience.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Drug Enforcement Administration
Washington, D.C. 20537

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How to Apply

Send a completed Application for Federal Employment, SF-171, and, if you have a limited work history or wish to be credited for scholastic achievement, include OPM Form 1170/17, List of College Courses and Certificate of Scholastic Achievement. Forms are available at any Federal personnel office or Office of Personnel Management office. Send completed forms to DEA Headquarters, Office of Personnel, Washington, D.C. 20537

You may also send an application to any of the following DEA laboratories:

Special Testing and Research Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
7704 Old Springhouse Road
McLean, VA 22102-3494

Northeast Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
555 West 57th Street
Suite 1886
New York, NY 10019

Mid-Atlantic Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
460 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20532

North Central Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
610 South Canal Street
Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60607

Western Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
450 Golden Gate Avenue
Box 36075
San Francisco, CA 94102

Southeast Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
5205 N.W., 84th Avenue
Miami, FL 33166

Southwest Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
P.O. Box 1536
National City, CA 92050

South Central Laboratory
Drug Enforcement Administration
1880 Regal Row
Dallas, TX 75235

DEA welcomes qualified applicants with current or former Federal service, as well as those in private employment or in school.

Undergraduates may also apply to the Office of Personnel Management during their senior year to receive a conditional rating subject to completion of education requirements. Before final selection, applicants must submit more forms and pass a Top Secret security clearance.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment based on ability, regardless of race, sex, creed, color, age, or national origin.

The Drug Enforcement Administration is an equal oppotunity employer.